



## Planning Commission Staff Report

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To: Planning Commission  
From: Planning Staff  
Report Date: November 10, 2016  
Meeting Date: November 15, 2016  
Item: Small Living Spaces: tiny houses and Sandpoint's Accessory Dwelling Unit and Cottage Housing ordinances

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### General Information:

<b>Requested Actions:</b>	Discuss small living spaces in order to better address Sandpoint's housing needs
<b>Included in Staff Report:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Overview</li><li>2. Relevant comprehensive plan policies</li><li>3. Relevant links</li></ol>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Accessory Dwelling Unit Code</li><li>2. Cottage Housing Ordinance</li></ol>

### Overview:

Since the adoption of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Sandpoint has been working to increase housing stock diversity in order to provide additional workforce housing in the city, while protecting the traditional and historic aspects of neighborhoods. This agenda topic is intended to initiate discussion about what the City has done so far and to seek input from the Commission on how the city can improve upon these efforts specifically with regards to "tiny houses", accessory dwelling units and the cottage ordinance.

### Tiny Houses

The Planning commission specifically asked for "tiny houses" as a discussion topic at a future meeting. In order to combat rising housing costs, tiny houses have become a popular option across the nation. For the purpose of this report, tiny houses are 500 square feet or less with a kitchen and a

bathroom, mounted on wheels, and able to be pulled by a vehicle. There are however, issues in allowing these types of homes in Sandpoint. Namely, tiny houses with wheels are classified and licensed as RVs. Sandpoint's building code requires permanent dwelling units to be installed on a foundation.

### **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) §9-1-8**

Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2009, the city finished a complete rezoning process in 2014. Previously only allowed by special permit, ADUs are now allowed by right within all residentially zoned areas. With the adoption of the ADU ordinance also came design requirements regarding eave length, roof-pitch, and the overall design of the ADU matching the primary dwelling unit.

### **Cottage Ordinance §9-4-7**

Another solution for providing small living spaces in Sandpoint is the utilization of the Cottage Housing ordinance. Cottage housing provides a unique development opportunity in residential zones where units are not required to front public streets in a similar manner to multi-family developments while retaining the design characteristics of single family housing. No developer has yet taken advantage of this code likely because the density bonuses provided only pencil out in Residential Single-family zones. Additionally, this ordinance has some of the strictest design requirements in all of the zoning code in order to ensure cottage developments fit in with surrounding single-family uses. One aspect of consideration for which staff is seeking guidance is if density standards should be changed or removed—letting setbacks and other area requirements in the code determine how many cottages can be constructed on a parcel. Below are some highlights of the current ordinance:

- Cottages may be built at up to 1.7 units per single-family home allowed in the underlying zone (a 5 unit cottage housing development would require a 14,705 square foot lot)
- Cottage housing developments can be 4-12 units in size
- Cannot be within 750' of another cottage housing development in the RS zone
- Each cottage requires one off-street parking space
- Cottages may not exceed 1,000 square feet and footprints not to exceed 800 square feet
- For each cottage in the development, there must be 400 square feet of common open space
- All cottages are required to front towards common open space
- Facades of cottages facing the street require additional design standards to ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment

### **Relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies:**

- Goal CD-1: Historic Town, Policy A: Ensure that all commercial, single and multi-family development respect the town's unique historic character, in architecture, density and in site planning.
- Goal CD-1: Historic Town, Policy B: Facilitate reinvestment in and adaptive reuse of historic structures, districts and neighborhoods.
- Goal CD-2: Resource Conservation, Policy A: Locate population intensity in and near the downtown and where urban services are readily available.
- Goal CD-2: Resource Conservation, Policy F: Encourage small accessory dwelling units throughout Sandpoint.

- Goal LU-1: Efficient Land Use, Policy H: Encourage small, conforming, ADU's throughout the City.
- Goal LU-2: Traditional Patterns, Policy C: Encourage development of single-family housing on small, 5,000 to 7,000 square foot or less, parcels within CA-2 and CA-3 areas.
- Goal H-1: Housing Variety, Policy A: Encourage diversity in housing types by permitting detached, duplex, townhouse, stacked flats, ADUs and other types as appropriate in land use districts.
- Goal H-1: Housing Variety, Policy B: Encourage low to moderate-income housing with development incentives (like density bonuses) or other similar strategies.
- Goal H-1: Housing Variety, Policy C: Help reduce household transportation costs by locating housing near daily needs.
- Goal H-1: Housing Variety, Policy D: Blend mixed densities in neighborhoods to provide for income diversity among neighborhood residents while ensuring that the bulk, mass or scale of any individual development does not dominate a street.
- Goal H-2: Existing Neighborhoods, Policy B: Create street environments that would be appropriate for historic single-family neighborhoods.
- Goal H-2: Existing Neighborhoods, Policy C: Encourage small accessory dwelling units throughout Sandpoint.
- Goal H-3: New Neighborhoods, Policy D: Encourage a variety of housing sizes within a block.
- Goal E-3: Workforce Needs, Policy A: Encourage diversity of housing types as appropriate in land use districts.

### **Relevant Links:**

- <http://www.cottagecompany.com/>
- <http://pocket-neighborhoods.net/index.html>
- <https://www.planning.org/planning/2016/feb/tinyhouses.htm>
- <http://americantinyhouseassociation.org/>
- <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/business/article26196871.html>